

D# 25B LAND USE PERMIT PROCEDURES

General Description

The City of Renton Planning Division made this docket item request. This item proposes to amend the Land Use Permit Procedures Table, RMC 4-8-080G and associated code sections in order to streamline land use permit procedures. This docket amendment looks at re-evaluating the land use application processes. Specifically, staff review included an evaluation of each permit type and assessing the value that is added to the decision making process by the permits review process. Staff's review also included an evaluation of the permitting process in terms of public involvement and how onerous the process may be for the applicant. This evaluation resulted in two recommended types of changes to Title IV that included the removal of expired or unnecessary permit types and changing the processes associated with short plats, Planned Urban Development (PUD) preliminary and final, some variance and conditional use permit procedures. Based on the above-mentioned changes, staff has also proposed reorganization that would eliminate project flow charts. The following list describes each proposed change in more detail:

- Planned Urban Development (PUD): This permit has two parts: preliminary and final. Currently, both parts require approval by City Council, with a recommendation from the Hearing Examiner. The proposed changes would allow the Hearing Examiner to make the decision for a preliminary PUD and the final PUD would be approved administratively.
- Short Plats: Currently, short plats are divided into two categories. Four lots or less are reviewed administratively and 5 to 9 lots are approved by the Hearing Examiner. Staff proposes all short plats be approved administratively, including "hillside subdivisions" which historically have been approved by the Hearing Examiner.
- Conditional Use Permits: Currently, the Zoning Use Table in Title IV determines if a use needs a Hearing Examiner Conditional Use Permit or an Administrative Conditional Use Permit. See Attachment A for the proposed changes to Conditional Use Permit review.
- Variances: Currently, the majority of variances are approved administratively with the exception of critical areas variances and some height variances which are approved by the Hearing Examiner. The proposed changes would allow critical area variances and height variances to be approved administratively.
- Flow Charts: Flow charts are proposed to be removed from Title IV.
- "Clean up" changes: See Attachment B.

Impact Analysis

Effect on rate of growth, development, and conversion of land as envisioned in the Plan

The proposal's effect on the rate of growth, development, and conversion of land as envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan is not expected to change.

Effect on the City's capacity to provide adequate public facilities

Not applicable. There are no anticipated effects on the City's capacity to provide adequate public facilities created by the proposed changes.

Effect on the rate of population and employment growth

The proposed amendment would not affect the rate of population and employment growth.

Whether Plan objectives are being met as specified or remain valid and desirable

Not applicable. This docket amendment does not relate to any specific Plan objectives and/or policies. This docket amendment would be consistent with the Regulatory Reform Act and State laws and regulations.

Effect on general land values or housing costs

Not applicable.

Whether capital improvements or expenditures are being made or completed as expected

Not applicable.

Consistency with GMA, the Plan, and Countywide Planning Policies

Not applicable. See comments above under "Whether Plan objectives are being met as specified or remain valid and desirable".

Effect on critical areas and natural resource lands

The proposed changes to critical areas variances from Hearing Examiner approval to Administrative approval, with an appeal option to the Hearing Examiner, could potentially change public involvement in this process. These proposed changes would not have a direct effect on critical areas and natural resources. The proposed changes to this section of the code would eliminate a public hearing before the Hearing Examiner. However, the public would still have the opportunity to comment on the requested variances. Currently, many administrative processes get "bumped" up to the Hearing Examiner strictly because of a critical area variance. The ability to streamline these concurrent applications at an administrative level would increase efficiency in the Current Planning Section and provide a reduced review time for the applicants. If the applicant or an interested party felt that the administrative decision was not appropriate, the ability to appeal to the Hearing Examiner would remain available.

Effect on other considerations

Not applicable.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the docket request to streamline Land Use Permit processing within the City.

Implementation Requirements

Sections in Title IV of the City Code should be amended to reflect this proposal. The major code sections that would need to be amended are as follows: RMC 4-8-080G, Land Use Permit Procedures, RMC 4-8-070, Authority and Responsibilities, RMC 4-9-250, Variances, Waivers, Modifications, and Alternates, RMC 4-2-060 Zoning Use Table – Uses Allowed in Zoning Designations and RMC 4-8-080H to be deleted.

The following Attachments reflect some of the above changes:

Attachment A

Attachment B